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Message Text

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43
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ISO-00 EURE-00 CIAE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07

L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

OPIC-03 SAM-01 IO-10 AID-05 /082 W
---------- 090455
P R 171830Z MAR 75
FM AMEMBASSY LISBON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2126
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES
AMCONSUL LUANDA
AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION NATO
DIA WASHDC
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER
AMCONSUL OPORTO
AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 1486

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PO
SUBJ: REMARKS BY PCP SECGEN CUNHAL AT PCP RALLY MARCH 16

REF: LISBON 1447

SUMMARY: IN A SPEECH AT PCP POLITICAL RALLY, PCP SECGEN CUNHAL ATTACKED THE PPD, DELINEATED HIS VIEW OF THE PROBLEMS FACING THE COUNTRY, AND EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF HOLDING ELECTIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. PORTUGUESE COMMUNIST PARTY (PCP) HELD RALLY MARCH 16 OSTENSIBLY TO PRESENT ITS LIST OF CANDIDATES FROM THE LISBON DISTRICT FOR APRIL 12 ELECTIONS. PCP SECRETARY-GENERAL ALVARO CUNHAL AGAIN ATTACKED THE POPULAR DEMOCRATIC PARTY (PPD) FOR
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WAGING AN ANTI-COMMUNIST CAMPAIGN, EVEN AFTER THE MRCH 11

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COUP ATTEMPT (REFTEL). HE CALLED THE ATTACK ON THE MARCH 7
PPD RALLY IN SETUBAL A "REACTIONARY PROVOCATION," AND SPECULATED
THAT IT WAS "DETONATOR" FOR COUP ATTEMPT ON MARCH 11. CUNHAL CALLED
FOR ENTRANCE OF FELLOW-TRAVELING MDP INTO COALITION, AND ADUMBRATED
POSSIBILITY MDP MIGHT REPLACE PPD.

2. CUNHAL DESCRIBED THREE PROBLEMS FACING THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT:
FIRST, ESTABLISHMENT OF "DEMOCRATIC ORDER" TO ABOLISH THE
CLIMATE OF VIOLENCE "WHICH ONLY BENEFITS REACTION;" SECOND,
ECONOMIC SITUATION IN WHICH "LARGE MONOPOLIST GROUPS" ARE
SABOTAGING THE ECONOMY; THIRD, FOREIGN RELATIONS, WHERE "REACTION
ABROAD" IS CARRYING OUT CAMPAIGN AGAINST PORTUGUESE DEMOCRACY.
CUNHAL NOTED "ALARMIST" RUMORS THAT FOREIGN CITIZENS ARE NO
LONGER SAFE.

3. SPEAKING ABOUT ELECTIONS, CUNHAL SAID THAT THEY MUST BE HELD,
ANW THATLTHE COMMUNISTS MUST WAGE A SUCCESSFUL CAMPAIGN TO
INSURE A "GREAT VICTORY" FOR THE DEMOCRATIC FORCES. HE WARNED
THAT WHEN THE "REACTIONARY RIGHT" CLAIMED THAT THEY FAVORED
SOCIALISM, CARE MUST BE TAKEN TO ENSURE THEY ARE NOT TALKING
ABOUT A FORM OF "HITLERITE FASCISM." CUNHAL ENDED REMARKS BY
CALLING FOR UNITY OF ALL DEMOCRATICFORCES WHO WANT TO PROGRESS
TOWARD SOCIALISM.

4. COMMENT: IT IS CLEAR THAT PCP HAS GAINED GROUND IN AFTERMATH
OF LAST WEEK'S ABORTIVE COUP ATTEMPT. MARCH 15 RALLY HAD UN-
PRECEDED BY
TURNOUT OF NEARLY 100,000 PERSONS SHOUTING COMMUNIST
SLOGANS AND SINGING "AVANTE CAMARADA." THE PCP HAS, OF COURSE,
OVERLOOKED THE FACT THAT THE PPD WAS FIRST ON THE STREETS
AFTERNOON OF MARCH 11 WITH A COMMUNIQUE CONDEMNING COUP ATTEMPT.

5. COALITION PARTIES NOW ARE COMMUNISTS, SOCIALISTS, AND
PPD. IF PPD WERE REPLACED BY MDP, THIS WOULD PLACE SOCIALISTS
IN VERY DIFFICULT POSITION OF BEING ONLY NON-COMMUNIST
CIVILIAN VOICE IN WHAT IS LEFT OF CIVILIAN SIDE OF GOVERNMENT.
HOWEVER, PCP WOULD CONSIDER ENTRANCE OF MDP INTO GOVERNMENT
WITHOUT DEPARTURE OF PPD A SIGNIFICANT ADVANCE IN ITSELF.
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